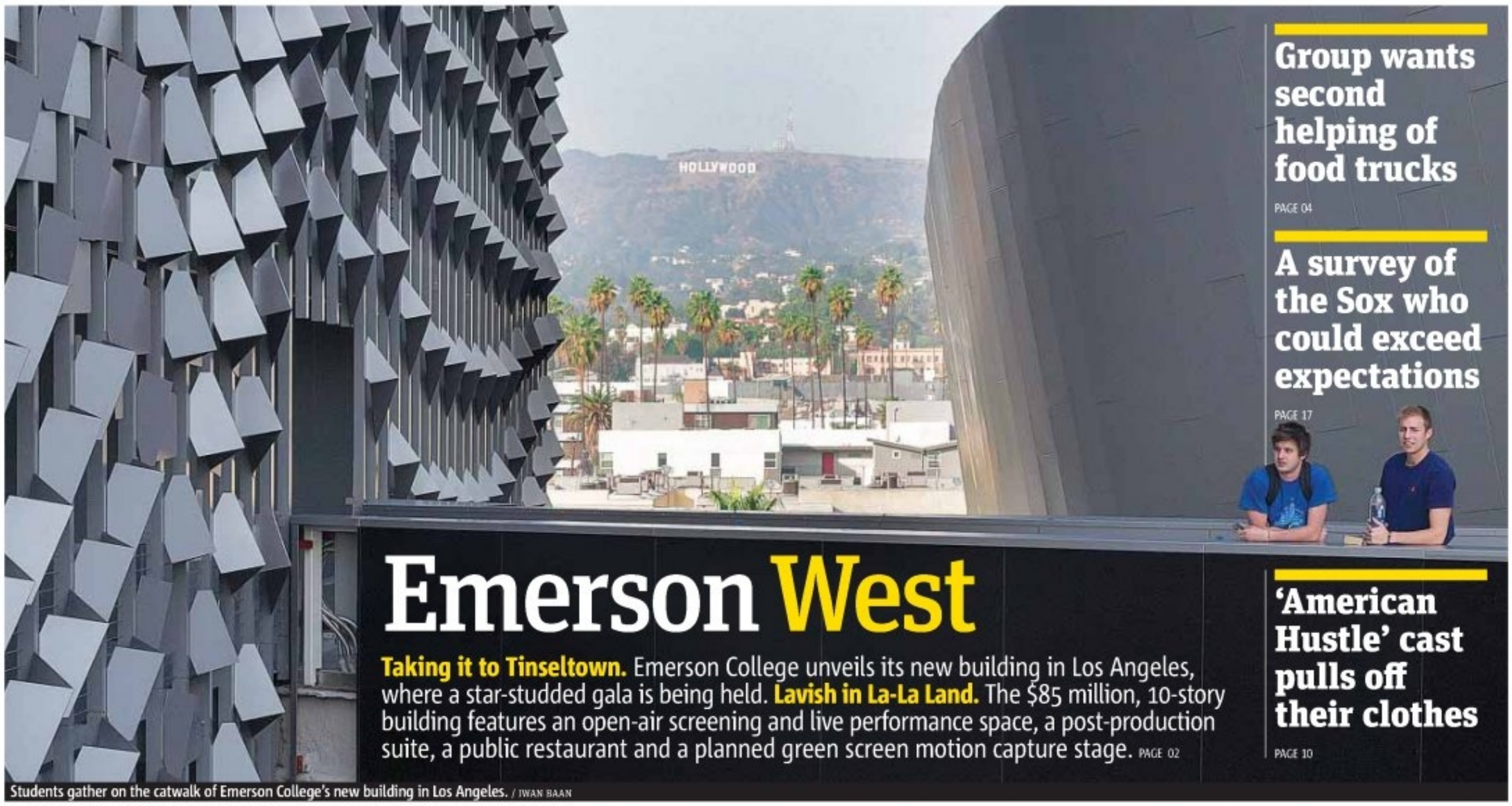
THE 'TRACKS' OF HIS TEARS

RITTER MAKES A POWERFUL BREAKUP ALBUM. PAGE 12

metro
BOSTON Thursday, February 27, 2014 www.metro.us | t: MetroBOS | f: MetroBoston



Group wants second helping of food trucks

PAGE 04

A survey of the Sox who could exceed expectations

PAGE 17

Emerson West

Taking it to Tinseltown. Emerson College unveils its new building in Los Angeles, where a star-studded gala is being held. **Lavish in La-La Land.** The $85 million, 10-story building features an open-air screening and live performance space, a post-production suite, a public restaurant and a planned green screen motion capture stage. PAGE 02

'American Hustle' cast pulls off their clothes

PAGE 10

Students gather on the catwalk of Emerson College's new building in Los Angeles. / IWAN BAAN

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Emerson's new building on Sunset Boulevard in Los Angeles, above, is illuminated at dusk. The residence towers and the academic center are shown in an aerial view, top right, and students gather in the community kitchen, bottom right. / IWAN BAAN

A look inside Emerson College Los Angeles

See more at www.metro.us

Opening gala. Some famous alumni are expected to attend the grand opening next week, including Denis Leary and Maria Menounos.

Opening gala

What would a grand opening in Hollywood be without a star-studded gala?

- Emerson is planning a gala for its new Los Angeles center and it helps when you have more than a few famous alumni.
- Those expected to attend include Denis Leary, Jennifer Coolidge, Maria Menounos and Henry Winkler.
- Winkler, who graduated in 1967, said on Twitter that he was impressed by the new building.
- "The building is beautiful and I can't wait to work with the acting students," he said.
- Menounos, a 2000 graduate, called the building "kinda unbelievable!" in a tweet to Metro.

Emerson College is going Hollywood — permanently.

The liberal arts college opened its first permanent building on Sunset Boulevard in Los Angeles last month and is planning to hold a grand opening gala next week that will be attended by some of the school's most famous alumni.

The $85 million, 10-story building features classrooms, an open-air screening and live performance space, a post-production suite, computer labs, faculty offices, a screening room, a planned green screen motion capture stage and a restaurant open to the public. It can also house up to 217 students who previously resided in leased apartments.

Students participating in the program take two courses while also participating in an internship in television, film, marketing, acting, screenwriting, journalism or another field.

By the numbers

100

About 100 upperclassmen take part in the Emerson Los Angeles program each semester.

200

The new permanent facility means the program can grow to about 200 students per semester.

Doug Herzog, president of Viacom Entertainment Group and a 1981 graduate of Emerson, said the new, permanent facility will help the Boston-based school further cement its reputation in the West Coast city.

"Having our own home base, and own sort of flagship as it were, changes everything for the kids who are going to be here and for the Emersonians going to work here and continuing to build the Emerson reputation and brand. And for those in town who don't know a lot about Emerson, it sends a real message: We're here to play, and we're here to stay," Herzog said in a telephone interview.

Emerson's Los Angeles program was started in 1986, and more than 4,300 students have participated. In 2008, the college bought a vacant lot on Sunset Boulevard and began construction on the 107,000-square-foot facility in 2012.

The unique design, done by architect Thom Mayne, features sustainable elements including a sun shading system that adapts to changing weather conditions to maintain indoor temperature and natural light levels.

"Emerson LA will provide our students with an unparalleled hands-on experience that only living in this great city can offer," Emerson President Lee Pelton said in a statement. "The opening of this magnificent building on Sunset Boulevard makes a statement that Emerson is committed to the city of Los Angeles and to the entertainment and communication industries for the long term."

Berklee rising

Music school dedicates Mass. Avenue tower

Add Berklee College of Music to the list of Boston schools opening new buildings this year.

While the new building, at 160 Massachusetts Ave., opened to students earlier this year, it was officially dedicated Wednesday with a light display on the tower that was set to students' music.

The 16-story, $100 million tower includes 173 dorm rooms for 369 students, 23 practice rooms, six two-story common areas, a fitness center and a 400-seat dining hall that doubles as a performance space.

A 10-studio music production complex is almost complete.

MICHAEL NAUGHTON
michael.naughton@metro.us

Top 3

What's trending online at Metro.us

1 "'Dunkin' Love" uses Dunkin' Donuts to spoof Beyonce's "Drunk in Love"'

2 'GIF: Pope Francis meets his 'mini-me' in St. Peter's Square'

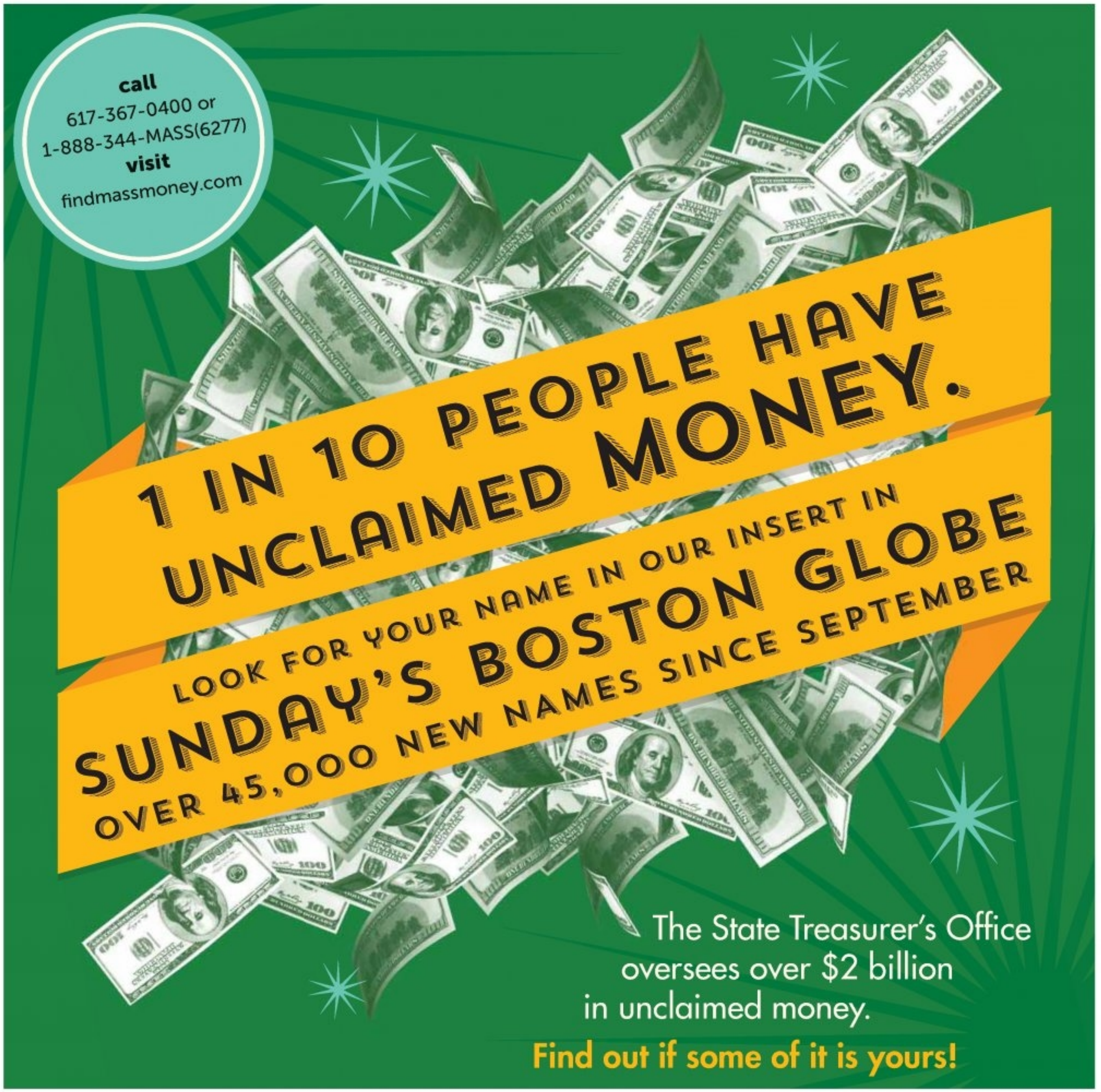
3 'PHOTOS: Guy puts random household objects in his beard, quirky pictures go viral'

Today's tweet

"En route to Boston. A little too excited about the Cheeseboy in South Station."

@megtirrell makes the best of this grilled cheese and soup weather.

Office of the State Treasurer and Receiver General - Unclaimed Property Division



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New charges. Russian arrested outside Kerry's home appears in court

A Russian national who was arrested last year after taking pictures outside Secretary of State John Kerry's Beacon Hill home pleaded not guilty on Wednesday to child pornography charges.

Vladimir Romanov, 30, was indicted last week on six counts of possession of child pornography, according to the Suffolk district attorney's office. He was arrested Wednesday by Boston police and Diplomatic Security Service agents.

Romanov's arrest comes after investigators conducted a months-long investigation after his arrest last July, which led to the discovery of the pornographic images.

Romanov was arrested after he parked in a no-parking zone on Beacon Hill and began taking photographs of Kerry's home.

He allegedly refused to identify himself when approached by federal agents and was arrested for drinking in public. METRO

Security

No bags allowed at Marathon: BAA

The Boston Athletic Association on Wednesday announced a new "no bags" policy for this year's Boston Marathon. No bags will be allowed on buses from Boston to Hopkinton, and bags will not be transported from Hopkinton back to Boston. The BAA said it will provide runners with heat retention capes at the end of the race. METRO

Petitioners call for more food trucks in Boston

See more at www.metro.us

In addition to more food trucks, petitioners want them to be able to serve food at night. / NICOLAUS CZARNECKI, METRO

Chow down. A local food blogger hopes to drive food trucks into Boston's nightlife.

An online petition to get more food trucks on the streets of Boston is about halfway to reaching its goal.

"I have seen more and more [food] trucks wanting to get into the game, and a lot more trucks participating in the lottery for city spots," said food blogger Steven Leibowitz of Hubfoodtrucks.com, who created the Change.org petition.

"As the number of trucks has increased, the number of spots that are available really haven't. It's very difficult for new trucks to have much of a presence in the city," he said.

Some city spots that petitioners believe are underserved include Downtown Crossing, Fenway, outside the TD Garden and other entertainment venues.

The push also aims to let trucks operate at night: "that way after a show people can go eat something that is convenient and nearby," Leibowitz said.

The petition has collected 231 signatures in the past week. Leibowitz hopes to collect 269 more, then bring the petition to Mayor Marty Walsh.

Quoted

"Food trucks have provided residents and people working in Boston options to creative, innovative menus."

Change.org petition

MORGAN ROUSSEAU
morgan.rousseau@metro.us

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Nataliya L., USA Vein Clinics Patient

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MBTA

T searches for child harasser

Transit Police are searching for a man they suspect of berating and swearing at a little girl on the Red Line Monday, then assaulting a man who tried to put a stop to the harassment. He is described as black, and between the ages of 27 and 35. METRO

Remembrance

Quincy board OKs 'Puppy Doe' memorial

Quincy officials recently approved of a plan to erect a memorial to a fatally abused and tortured dog that gained international attention for her treatment.

The Quincy Parks and Recreation Board approved this month a citizen-led plan to install a memorial bench for "Puppy Doe" near where the dog was found injured, according to the Patriot Ledger. It is expected to be installed by the spring.

'Puppy Doe'
ANIMAL RESCUE LEAGUE OF BOSTON

The pit bull-type dog nicknamed "Puppy Doe" was found tortured and abused last August in Quincy. A man accused in the abuse has pleaded not guilty. METRO

Report. Boston hosting 2024 Olympics would be a 'monumental task'

Although it's feasible for Boston to host the 2024 Summer Olympics, a new report calls the task a "monumental" one that should not be taken lightly.

A special commission studying the viability of Boston hosting the 2024 Games has completed a draft report that does not outright recommend the city hold the Summer Olympics in Boston, but expresses optimism about the prospect.

The report pointed to the region's venue location challenges and limited space, as well as road and subway congestion, as chances to leverage the games and grow long-term economic development and infrastructure improvements.

"I am encouraged by the potential opportunities that can be borne out of hosting the Olympics," John Fish, the commission's chairman, told the Boston Globe.

"The next question needs to be asked: Is this in our best interests, socially, politically and economically?" said Fish.

The report did not go into how much it would cost to pull off the undoubtedly expensive endeavor.

Gov. Deval Patrick created the 11-member commission, which includes state lawmakers and private citizens, to determine whether Boston could meet the basic requirements for a host city set forth by the United States Olympic Committee, which is expected to narrow its search to a few American cities by the end of this year.

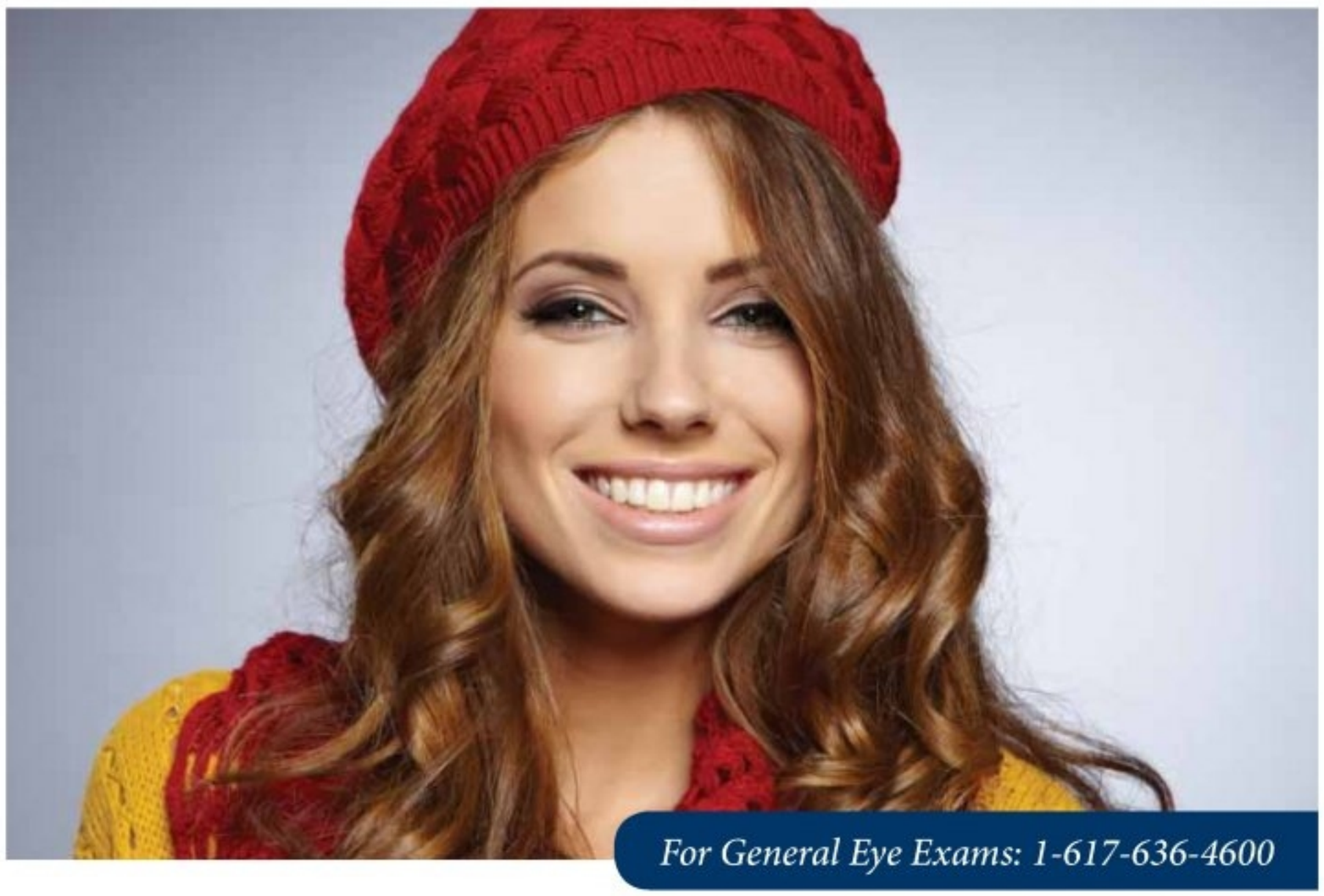
The commission has been analyzing the prospect since November. The draft report will undergo revisions this week, and is expected to be released to the public by Friday.

MORGAN ROUSSEAU

Scouting locations

Boston would need to find space for an 80,000-seat Olympic Stadium and a 100-acre athlete village in order to host the 2024 Olympics.

- Existing facilities at Boston's local campuses could potentially be used, according to the commission.
- The Boston Convention and Exhibition Center has 2.1 million square feet of flexible space and could potentially serve as the media center for the games.



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Fossil fuel foes hold rally

A group of demonstrators held a rally outside the State House on Wednesday urging lawmakers to move forward with a bill to divest the state pension fund from fossil fuels. The group of a few dozen included teachers, public employees and faith leaders, who planned to also meet with legislators to ask them for their assistance.

NICOLAUS CZARNECKI, METRO

Obama pitches plan to fix crumbling infrastructure

Obama's plan would fill the gap in the Highway Trust Fund and also invest an additional $90 billion in infrastructure projects. / GETTY IMAGES

GOP. Boehner said a bailout for the highway fund would likely be out of the question.

President Barack Obama on Wednesday announced a $302 billion plan to fix the nation's crumbling roads and bridges, but the proposal, which relies on tax reform for funding, is not expected to gain traction in Congress.

Congress faces a Sept. 30 deadline to renew federal funding for transportation programs, and the Highway Trust Fund that helps pay for road and bridge projects is teetering on insolvency, making it difficult for state governors to plan projects that typically run through September and into the fall.

"Meeting with the president [Tuesday,] this is one of the issues that was discussed. We've got to find a funding mechanism to fund our infrastructure needs," Speaker of the House John Boehner said.

"I wish I could report to you that we've found it, but we haven't."

Even Democratic Sen. Barbara Boxer, head of the committee that oversees work on the highway bill, said on Wednesday that Obama's plan was not likely to pass Congress.

"I think it's good, but I don't hold out hope for it," Boxer told a conference of state transportation officials in Washington.

But Transportation Secretary Anthony Foxx told reporters traveling with Obama that it was important for all sides to start talking about how to avert what he called a transportation funding "cliff." **REUTERS**

By the numbers

$150B

Obama's four-year plan relies on revenues raised by ending some tax breaks to free up $150 billion for transportation. That would only happen through corporate tax reform, a political long shot ahead of November midterm elections.

Survey

Majority of Americans now support gay marriage

Support for gay marriage has surged in the United States in the decade since it first became legal in Massachusetts, with just over half of Americans now supporting the idea, according to a survey released on Wednesday.

The survey on attitudes toward lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people comes as U.S. lawmakers and courts are increasingly allowing same-sex couples to wed.

Some 53 percent of the 4,509 Americans surveyed by the Public Religion Research Institute said they supported gay marriage, up from 32 percent in 2003, when Massachusetts became the first state to legalize it.

GAY MARRIAGE
GETTY IMAGES

PRRI Chief Executive Robert Jones said the poll joined other surveys showing that a majority of Americans back gay marriage. The decade-long uptrend marks "a fairly remarkable shift" in attitude, he told a conference call. **REUTERS**

Student loans

US consumer bureau sues college chain ITT

The consumer watchdog said on Wednesday it has sued ITT Educational Services Inc. for what the agency says are predatory student lending practices that could lead borrowers to default on their loans.

The U.S. Consumer Financial Protection Bureau said the Indiana-based for-profit college chain exploited students and pushed them into "high-cost private loans" that leave them strapped with debt.

The agency, in a complaint filed in U.S. District Court in Indianapolis, Ind., said it is seeking restitution for victims, a civil fine and an injunction against the company. **REUTERS**

Perry and Mayer are no more (apparently)

Katy Perry, wherever you are (read: likely frolicking around your L.A. mansion in a getup only Willy Wonka's fever dreams could have spawned), we hope you're happy. You should be, because you've finally rid yourself, hopefully for good, of that life-sucker named John Mayer.

Though just last week the "Roar" singer was seen sporting some significant bling, sparking rumors of a possible engagement, it seems Mayer the notorious womanizer is, well, still just a notorious womanizer. Sources close to the couple told E! Online that Perry broke up with Mayer in the last few days.

A word of advice, Katy: If he ever comes crawling back — maybe he comes across footage of you and Miley Cyrus swapping spit during her "Bangerz" tour and wants in on the action — you just take a deep breath and "Roar" right in his face. Let him know that "Who You Love" is not John "Date-and-Dash" Mayer. Also, don't write a sad breakup song about him. The only thing the world needs less than another song by John Mayer is another song about John Mayer.

KASIA PILAT

Kate Hudson and Naomi Watts smile on Tuesday in California.

ALL PHOTOS GETTY IMAGES

Cha-cha-cha changes for Kate Hudson

Kate Hudson? Is that you? The actress looked a bit — um, how do I put this delicately? — "facially stretched" in West Hollywood on Tuesday at Bvlgari's Decades of Glamour pre-Oscar party (the blonde next to her is, of course, Naomi Watts). Hudson is battling breakup rumors with fiance Matt Bellamy, with whom she has a son. "Matt is pretty down-to-earth and happy in England, while Kate is very L.A.-focused," a source recently told the New York Daily News. "They are leading separate lives. It hasn't been working out the way they planned and they've been trying very hard for the sake of their son." While a rep for the 34-year-old daughter of Goldie Hawn denies the rumors of trouble, she and Bellamy have not been spotted together in months.

THE WORD

Dorothy Robinson takes on the world of gossip.

DOROTHY ROBINSON
@dorothyatmetro
dorothy.robinson@metro.us

The Muppets take on Instagram

Although it's just a clever (and cute) marketing campaign for their new movie, "Muppets Most Wanted," we're still in love with all of the "selfies" the Muppets are posting on their Instagram account. This one, by Dr. Bunsen Honeydew, came with the caption "#Selfies are scientifically proven to boost health and happiness!" Err, especially those posted by Kim Kardashian.

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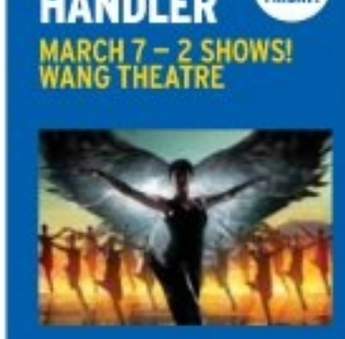

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Amy Adams and Jennifer Lawrence show off their assets in "American Hustle." / COLUMBIA PICTURES

The American (fashion) hustle

Retro style.
Oscar-nominated costume designer Michael Wilkinson suits up the movie characters for the biggest con of all: their style.

Ah, the '70s, an era where the clothes were as slinky as a John Travolta "Saturday Night Fever" dance move. Now, the big hair, men's chest bush and plunging necklines are back in the Oscar-nominated "American Hustle." Costume designer Michael Wilkinson tells us about the film's most award-deserving performance: Amy Adams' flash-proof cleavage.

Talk us through Amy Adams' style.
Amy's character Sydney goes through an amazing trajectory in the film. She tries to reinvent herself: She gets a job at Cosmo, looks at who she wants to be, what she wants to project to the world — and she falls in love. She gets access to these clothes through Christian Bale's character and she starts dressing as the woman she has always wanted to be. She invents this amazing persona for herself as a sophisticated high-end woman wearing Halston, Yves Saint Laurent, Gucci and Diane von Furstenberg.

What makes the '70s such a defining era for women's fashion?
It's such a liberating time. It was a new style of sexy and glamorous clothes: less structure and tailoring and much more streamlined, dramatic lines.

Amy wears revealing clothes. What were you trying to portray?
She really enjoyed exploring the way these clothes made her feel and how they affected her performance. When her character wears revealing and provocative clothes it's a sign of confidence, but there's also a fragility and vulnerability because there's not a lot between you and the world. She has to walk in a certain way that demands attention.

Were there any malfunctions?
[Laughs] Everything was kosher — nothing popped out. She had a dictum that helped her to survive those dramatic necklines. Three things she had to be aware of: Carry herself upright, be conscious how she stands and sits, and avoid strong winds and draughts. And Amy also had to make sure that she had the editor on her side, so there's a lot of judicious cutting.

RICHARD PECKETT
richard.peckett@metro.lu

On the runway

Capes are #Trending, arm function is not

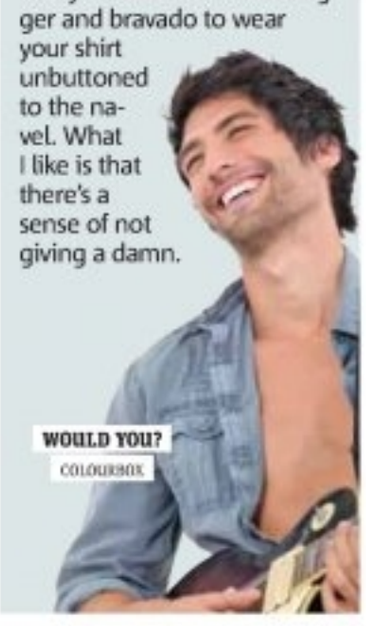
Capes, once the sartorial trademark of swashbuckling pirates and Andre Leon Talley, have re-emerged on the fall '14 runways. First we have the cape proper: They're dramatic at Ferragamo and operatic at Dolce & Gabbana. Then you have a more unique take on the trend: the blanket. Shoulder-sweeping knits were seen everywhere from Etro to Burberry Prorsum and Prabal Gurung. Arm function is not high on designers' fall priority list, that's for sure.

KIT GILBERT

PRABAL GURUNG
GETTY IMAGES

Ready for bare chests?

Should modern men bring back unbuttoning our shirts to the navel?
I think so, yeah. There's no fear of being judged — not as body-conscious as we are today. It takes a certain swagger and bravado to wear your shirt unbuttoned to the navel. What I like is that there's a sense of not giving a damn.



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ADVICE FOR A LAGGING LIBIDO

The question

I'm writing because I am unhappy with my sexual relationship with my girlfriend of more than two years. I care for her deeply and am very attracted to her. I am concerned that she doesn't really want to have sex much at all. We recently went three weeks without having sex and, when I mentioned this, she insisted it hadn't been that long. She's also extremely fussy and only seems to like it when it is gentle. ... I've tried to talk about these issues with her many times. Regarding the amount of sex we have, she claims men just want it more and a relationship isn't about "nookie on demand." I agree with her, to a point. But I think something deeper is going on here and I don't know what to do about it. Any advice or thoughts you have would be welcome.

Your irritation is justified: She's your girlfriend. Shouldn't regular sex be part of the deal? Here's the hard part, my love. Her frustration is equally warranted. She has shared a truth that may be hard for you to accept: Her sexual desire isn't as strong or kinky as you would like it to be.

Libidos are the result of individualized biological, physiological and social factors as well as personal preferences. While an exact match isn't required for a healthy relationship, it can be wearying to share a mattress with an ill-fitted counterpart. Don't be discouraged. Here is my advice:

1 Manage your expectations. Sex aside, it sounds like you both enjoy and want to remain in the relationship. Not bad. We often have unrealistic expectations when it comes to sex. If everything else is in check try ...

IS HE TOO EAGER, OR IS SHE JUST BORED? / STOCKBYTE

2 Bring her off the sidelines. So your girlfriend isn't "nookie on demand." Fine. That doesn't mean she isn't interested in you sexually. If you're getting release by yourself, invite her in on the action.

3 Warm her up. Be reeeaally good to her — even more than you're undoubtedly being now. Massages. Gifts. Time. Don't do anything with ulterior motives, though. If you do she will likely sniff that out, and she may be pissed.

Funky Brown Chick

TWANNA A. HINES, M.S.

AWARD-WINNING EDUCATOR AND SEX COLUMNIST. FOLLOW HER ON TWITTER @FUNKYBROWNCHICK

No, seriously.

Sleep with someone else

I'm not advocating cheating. If you both agree you're compatible outside the bedroom but not inside, consider having a frank, adult talk about exploring wider options.

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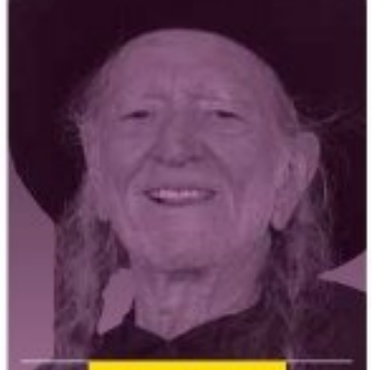
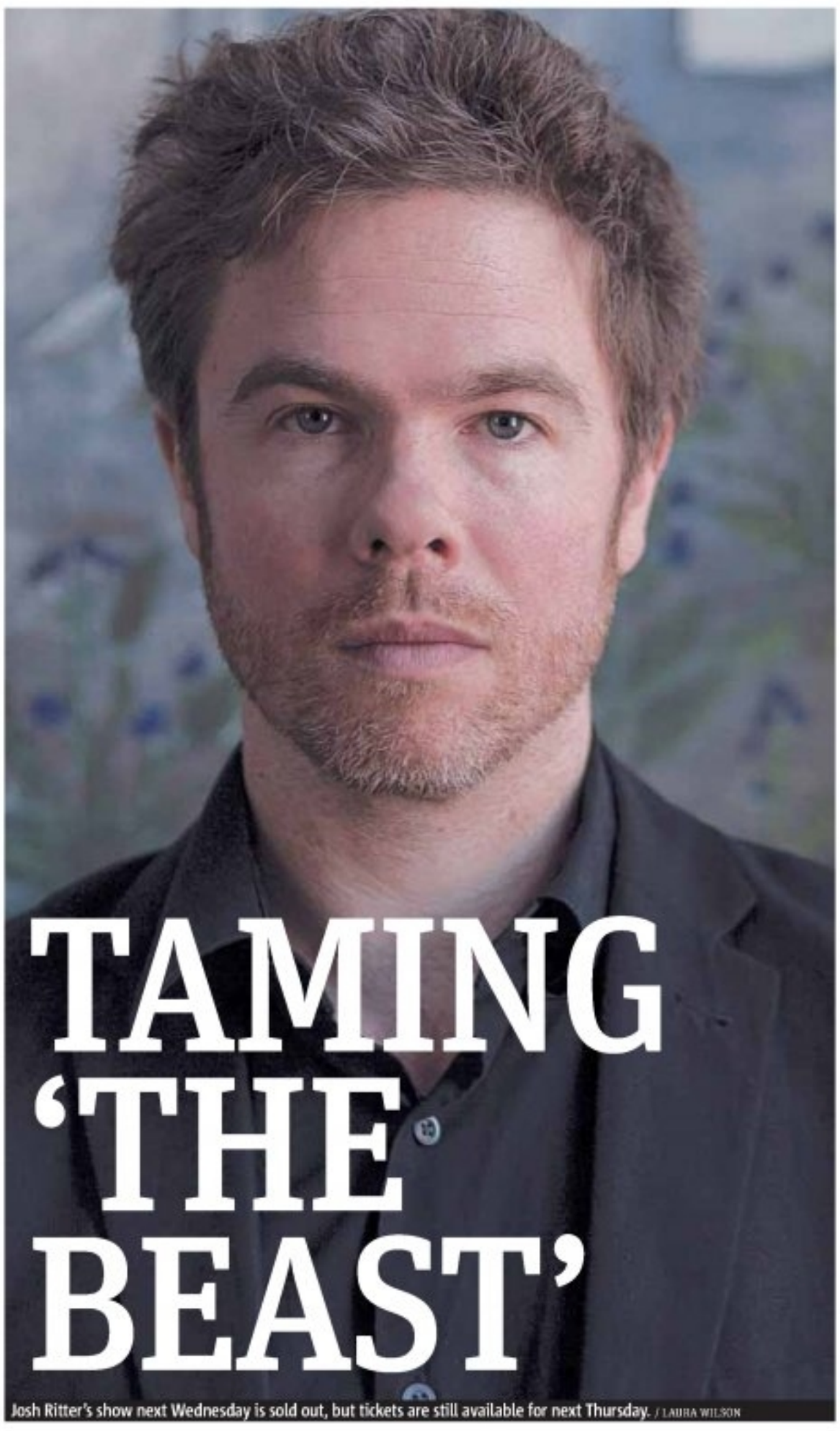

On sale Friday
Juana Molina
April 14, The Sinclair
Iggy Azalea
April 23, House of Blues
Baths
April 26, The Sinclair
The Faint
May 16, Royale
Eels
May 29, Berklee Performance Center
Die Antwoord
June 7, House of Blues
Sharon Van Etten
June 11, The Sinclair
Daryl Hall and John Oates
June 12, Blue Hills Bank Pavilion
Willie Nelson and Family
With Alison Krauss and Union Station (featuring Jerry Douglas) and Kacey Musgraves
June 17, Blue Hills Bank Pavilion



TAMING 'THE BEAST'

Josh Ritter's show next Wednesday is sold out, but tickets are still available for next Thursday. / LAURA WILSON

Tangled up in blue. Songwriter Josh Ritter gives us his version of the Great American Breakup Album.

Nobody likes a breakup, but for some artists it's difficult to resist jumping at the chance to write that one great breakup album. Idahoan songwriter Josh Ritter tackled the subject of his recent divorce head-on in his most recent album, last year's "The Beast in Its Tracks."

Musicians from Fleetwood Mac and Beck to Alanis Morissette and Bon Iver have given the world their unique takes on heartbreak, and Ritter wanted his to be just as poignant. He wanted to be fair and stay restrained in his sentiments, he wanted to do it for himself and, perhaps most of all, he wanted to get over it quickly.

"You find this thing that is bothering you, this emotion, and you catch it like this special moth and [don't] have to think about it anymore," says the singer from the road in Chicago. (He brings a two-night acoustic stand to Somerville Theatre next week.)

The results of working quickly through the pain are evident. Once Ritter did have that proverbial moth in the jar, he set to work recording a collection of songs that sound remarkably fresh and light, considering their potentially heavy subject matter.

"I wanted things to be small because I didn't think the songs could hold a lot of instrumentation," says Ritter. "I felt like these were simple songs, and if you added anything to them they would be cheesy."

For Ritter, keeping things simple brought magnificent results. "Evil Eye" augments simple country-folk instrumentation with percussion that sounds like it was tapped out on a card table. Later in "Appleblossom Rag," it sounds like someone is doing the dishes in the background. By sucking you in and making you feel like you're in the room, Ritter sets up a one-two punch: It's easy to jump in and focus on his poetic explorations of stepping into new love while still wrapping up all of the old baggage.

"Being in the recording studio, the temptation is there to add too much stuff," says the singer of his modus operandi. "Sometimes I think it really gets in the way of true emotion."

From the obvious riffing in the album title to the brisk phrasing and familiar chord changes of "New Lover" (which echoes "You're Gonna Make Me Lonesome When You Go"), it's not much of a stretch to see how Ritter's "Beast in Its Tracks" mimics Bob Dylan's 1975 epochal breakup album, "Blood on the Tracks." Dylan's album is like the Old Testament among folkies, and Ritter readily admits that it was on his mind.

"I didn't have much that I was happy about at the time," he recounts of his breakup period. Aside from being up and down emotionally, the singer also felt inspired by Dylan's ability to follow the stream of emotions that come with writing through heartbreak.

"It gave me a chance to put that album to the test."

JONATHAN DONALDSON
letters@metro.us

If you go

Josh Ritter

March 5 and 6
With Gregory Alan Isakov
Somerville Theatre
55 Davis Square
Somerville
$27, 800-745-3000
www.ticketmaster.com

Quoted

"Being in the recording studio, the temptation is there to add too much stuff. Sometimes I think it really gets in the way of true emotion." Ritter

Also onstage

St. Vincent

Tonight, 8
House of Blues
15 Lansdowne St., Boston
$25-$45, 800-745-3000
www.livenation.com

Annie Clark, the force behind St. Vincent, has been wonderfully incomprehensible from day one. Her pixie-like appearance belies the heaviness of her music, a weird yet perfect blend of dance, chamber pop, rock and electronic that can feel like an ecstatic, symphonic bludgeoning. On top of that, she has the gall to be a guitar heroine (and release an album earlier this week that might be the best of 2014).

ST. VINCENT
PROVIDED

Also onstage

Rathborne

Monday, 9 p.m.
Great Scott
1222 Comm. Ave., Allston
$10, 18+, 800-745-3000
www.ticketmaster.com

Charismatic singer/songwriter Luke Rathborne's last two EPs, from 2011, saw him in an intimate, folksy, melancholic mode, but his new material on the album "Soft" aims for classic, new wave-era power pop, as evidenced not only by its sound but its amusing video for "Last Forgiven," which looks charmingly like a super cheap promo spot taped from MTV circa 1981.

MATTHEW DINARO

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Highballs are double-strained and near perfect. / DEREK KOUYOUMJIAN

When it comes to most Boston "lounges" you can usually feel a palpable sense of bro-fumes engulfing you the moment you open the door. I expected as much from Highball Lounge, the reincarnation of KO Prime at the Nine Zero Hotel, but was, thankfully, proven wrong.

Granted, the space reads like a high-end vodka commercial at first blush — the type of impeccably designed rom-com loft in which you'd expect Jennifer Aniston to be breaking up with an architect — down to the DJ booth and the well-appointed young professional crowd, but much to my confounded delight, it's both a comforting hang and a vastly more interesting cocktail program than I could've hoped.

The sleek presentation contrasts with playful touches — clean modern design meets reclaimed-wood retro aesthetic. There's a wall of vinyl-stocked shelves, a game room with an old tabletop video game, and vintage View-Master toys with the menus printed inside.

"We wanted to do a good cocktail bar, but not have it be too stuffy or a pretentious environment," explains bar manager Shaher Misif, a recent San Francisco transplant.

"We wanted to have group activities ... things you used to do when you were a kid."

One thing we did not do when we were kids is drink cocktails like these. The focus of the menu is on the titular highballs. "A highball, in its simplest form, is spirit and mixer," Misif says, although here they're serving what he calls "tricked-out" versions. Those include recipes made with rye, absinthe, raw sugar, bitters and soda. Unlike most bars, the highballs here are served in shorter, mismatched antique glasses.

The cocktail list is well balanced between whiskeys, tequilas, gins and rums, including a variety of flips, fizzes, swizzles and juleps.

Misif encourages guests to "spin the wheel" to explore options they might not normally drink. A recipe of mezcal, manzanilla sherry, chartreuse and amaro was a dry, sharp, understated bitter sip, while a flamed absinthe, mint, pineapple, citrus and agave cocktail was glorious.

"Most places people walk in and know what they're drinking. Here we're finding a lot of people going for the cocktails, ingredients they have to ask about. A lot of people like to say, 'You guys make us something, tell me what I like.'"

I like pretty much everything here so far.

If you go

Highball Lounge

90 Tremont St., Boston
617-772-0202
www.highballboston.com

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DANCE

TAO Dance Theater

Tonight and tomorrow
Citi Schubert Theater
265 Tremont St., Boston
$45-$60, 866-348-9738
www.citicenter.org
Lao Tzu said the Tao that can be described is not the true Tao. That seems to be the way this Chinese modern dance ensemble relates to the art of dance. One piece, simply titled "4," attempts to present the body as a pure visual experience, divorced from storytelling and representation—the dance that cannot be described.

MOVIES

'Lemonade Joe'

Friday, 8 p.m.
Somerville Theater
55 Davis Square, Somerville
$8, 617-625-5700
channel0.blogspot.com
Channel Zero presents this demented parody of an American Western from Iron Curtain-era Czechoslovakia. Weird cowboy Lemonade Joe seems to be a fiery temperance crusader, but we begin to suspect that he's really just trying to sell a brand of lemonade mysteriously named — wink, wink — Kolaloka. Does he really care about alcoholism, or just his share of the drink market?

THEATER

'Our Class'

Through Saturday
Boston University Theater
264 Huntington Ave., Boston
$15-$20, 617-933-8600
www.bostontheatrescene.com
Sort of like the British "Up" series on fast-forward, this play by Tadeusz Slobodzianek, based on a real Polish town, takes a look at the lives of 10 classmates—half Catholic, half

We want you

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Have an upcoming event that you want to let Metro readers know about? Send an email to events@metro.us and we'll get it on our new listings website.
Listings with shaded backgrounds are sponsored listings.

Jewish — over 80 years, from 1926 to 2006, as they grow up in a war-torn land, diverging from and colliding with each other, sometimes tragically.

'Neighbourhood Watch'

Through Saturday
Boston Center for the Arts
539 Tremont St., Boston
$30, 617-933-8600
www.zeitgeiststage.com
Zeitgeist Stage Company presents British playwright Alan Ackbourne's farce about busybody small-town gated community residents who, scared into comic paranoia by false alarm, start a neighborhood watch program. It starts out tame but gets way more real than anyone meant it to. Its increasingly zealous commander-in-chief soon becomes a bigger threat to the neighborhood than any petty crime.

ART

Young Artists: Artwork by Cambridge Public School Students

Through March 28
Multicultural Arts Center
41 Second St., Cambridge
Free, 617-577-1400
www.multiculturalartscenter.org
Picasso is said to have remarked, "Every child is an artist. The problem is how to remain an artist once he grows up." That sentiment might be worth keeping in mind as you look at these creations by Cambridge public school students from kindergarten through high school. Probably not all these kids will remain artists — and that makes these pieces all the more precious.

MUSIC

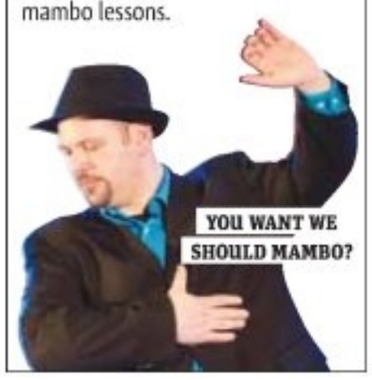
The Boston Conservatory presents

March 5-8
The Boston Conservatory Theater, 31 Hemenway St.
Box Office: (617) 912-9222 or bostonconservatory.edu/tickets
A legendary musical that examines the lives of three people whose friendship is tested by time, events, ambition and fate. Music and lyrics by Stephen Sondheim. Book by George Furth. Directed by Paul Daigneault.

MUSIC

Malachei Mambo

Tonight, 8, Oberon
2 Arrow St., Cambridge
$20-$25, 800-838-3006
www.bostonjewishmusicfestival.org
This Latin music ensemble, performing for the 2014 Boston Jewish Music Festival, is composed of Jewish and Latin musicians from Central and South America. In addition to music, the show features photography by Linda Hirsch and mambo lessons.



COMEDY

Justin Willman

Friday, 7 p.m.
Great Scott
1222 Comm. Ave., Allston
$15, 18+, 800-745-3000
www.ticketmaster.com
Justin Willman's act modernizes a somewhat dormant subgenre of standup — comedy magic. For Willman, this means playing into contemporary cynicism by deconstructing magic itself. One bit involves his verbally confused Siri app giving him bizarre instructions on how to do a trick. We think it's going to lead nowhere, and yet he sneaks an illusion in anyway. Pretty clever!
MATTHEW DINARO

THEATER

'And Still We Rise Fundraiser'

Wednesday, March 5
Calderwood Pavilion, BCA
539 Tremont St., Boston
$35 in advance at www.eventbrite.com
$40 at the door
Refreshments will be served
For more information please call 857-719-3884
www.andstillwerise.org
Get a sneak peek at this year's new show and an inside look at the creative process.

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AN ITALIAN CHEF BRINGS NEW FLAVORS TO FRENCH BISTRO

If you go

Petit Robert

Entrees: $19-$28
480 Columbus Ave., Boston
617-957-1517
www.petitrobertbistro.com

The dish

Keep it simple

Some classics should remain so. Ratatouille is a genius French vegetable dish, perfect on its own, with a baguette, or as a side dish. Petit Robert offers an au gratin version, but the cheese is so unnecessary: Ratatouille is a luscious and healthy dish in its classic state. Quaresima's highlights the contrast between the silky olive oil-soaked eggplant and the pepper's subtle piquancy, without being overbearingly tomato-y.

It's an interesting way to see the world — through food. Italian chef Stefano Quaresima recently arrived in Boston to head Petit Robert South End's kitchen. Before that, he worked in restaurants in Italy, France, the Maldives, Greece and the UK, including Raymond Blanc's double Michelin starred Le Manoir aux Quat'Saisons.

A Boston winter isn't exactly the warmest welcome, but Quaresima is enthusiastic: "Working in America was always so exciting to me. When this opportunity came up, I jumped at it," he says.

After his time in France, Quaresima should feel at home in the French bistro-style spot. Split between a cozy bar and more formal dining room, an old brick fireplace is a focal point in the unassuming pink clay and burgundy interior. The South End was the Fort Point of the last decade. Now, it has settled into being an attractive neighborhood with great food options.

Quaresima does have some restrictions at Petit Robert. After all, this local chain has a loyal clientele demanding favorites like French onion soup or a hearty plate of boeuf bourguignon with potatoes and rich wine gravy. But he's not confined to French classics. The creamy four-cheese gnocchi is topped with crunchy roasted pistachios; and sea bass is marinated in black tea, topped with a tomato and olive tapenade and served with chickpea and spinach stew. Both have a touch of the unexpected for a literal tongue twisting.

Seasoned chef Stefano Quaresima gives French classics a unique, tasty touch. / DEREK KOUYOUMJIAN

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Horoscope

♓ Pisces | Feb. 19-March 20. Don't let uncertainty stop you from making necessary changes. Personal growth requires you to take one step at a time.

♈ Aries | March 21-April 20. You will become involved in an interesting new relationship. Unusual rewards will come your way as a result of offering your services to a worthy cause or deserving individual.

♉ Taurus | April 21-May 21. By concentrating on love and the fun things in life, you will feel good about your future. Don't let negative people drag you down.

♊ Gemini | May 22-June 20. Opportunities are coming your way. Indecisiveness or hesitation will end up being costly. Relentless pursuit of your goals and keen concentration will enable you to achieve the desired results.

♋ Cancer | June 21-July 22. You will make substantial progress if you listen to advice given to you. With the relevant information, you will be able to take control of the situation.

♌ Leo | July 23-Aug. 22. Money matters will weigh heavily on your mind. Pay off outstanding debts and remind others of what they owe you. You will be able to relax once you have a clean slate.

♍ Virgo | Aug. 23-Sept. 22. By making some inexpensive and simple changes around the home, you can reduce your stress and calm your nerves. A comfortable environment is essential to your health.

♎ Libra | Sept. 23-Oct. 22. Don't feel as if life is passing you by. Find an activity that motivates you to participate. Being active will renew your energy.

♏ Scorpio | Oct. 23-Nov. 21. Someone may be withholding information. Ask direct questions that will reveal hidden secrets. Once that is determined, an answer will be found.

♐ Sagittarius | Nov. 22-Dec. 21. Attend meetings or social gatherings conducive to learning valuable information about something you aspire to. An expert will provide you with a practical plan.

♑ Capricorn | Dec. 22-Jan 20. Positive changes lie ahead. Discuss your future and your dreams with your loved ones. Now is an opportune time to seal contracts, close deals and finish any incomplete assignments.

♒ Aquarius | Jan. 21-Feb 18. You will be overwhelmed by the tasks expected of you. Discipline and courage will help you live up to your obligations. Be proud of your accomplishments. BERNICE BEDE OSOL

Letters

Even if we didn't start the fire, there's still a fire

Re: 'Global warming is a laughing matter' (Metro, Feb. 26) Letter writer Kevin Metz does an excellent job of parroting the self-serving wishful thinking the fossil fuel energy industries seem to be selling.

To illustrate their logic, imagine being a neighbor of Mr. Metz, and you notice his home is on fire. Being concerned, you alert him, "Mr. Metz, your home is on fire!"

Mr. Metz: "No, it is not."

Neighbor: "Yes it is. Look at the smoke and flames."

Mr. Metz: "Well, maybe, but it's not my fault."

Neighbor: "Regardless, we should call the fire department."

Mr. Metz: "That would be a waste of public resources, especially since I am sure it won't be that bad."

Neighbor: "But the fire could spread through the neighborhood if we don't call 911 soon!"

Mr. Metz: "Your hysteria makes me laugh."

MARK MACMILLAN, VIA EMAIL

Online

Read letters at Metro.us

In addition to news, features, updates and more, Metro is posting letters to the editor at Metro.us.

Time to say 'so long, Kabul'

Come on, people! Come on, voters all across America who still have little bit of influence over our elected officials! Isn't it time to demand we leave the nation that Vice President Dick Cheney, Secretary Colin Powell and friends said we should enter several months after Sept. 11 — Afghanistan — to combat terrorism? My God! It has been 13 years.

MICHAEL RAGSDALE, VIA EMAIL

letters@metro.us

Keep them as brief as possible, preferably under 100 words. Metro reserves the right to edit all letters. Please include your name and contact info.

Sudoku: Easy and hard

8						1		
5			8			7		
7		6	9	1		2		
			1	3	8	6		
		5		6		8		
		4	5	2	9			
		8		9	6	4		7
		1			7			3
		2						8

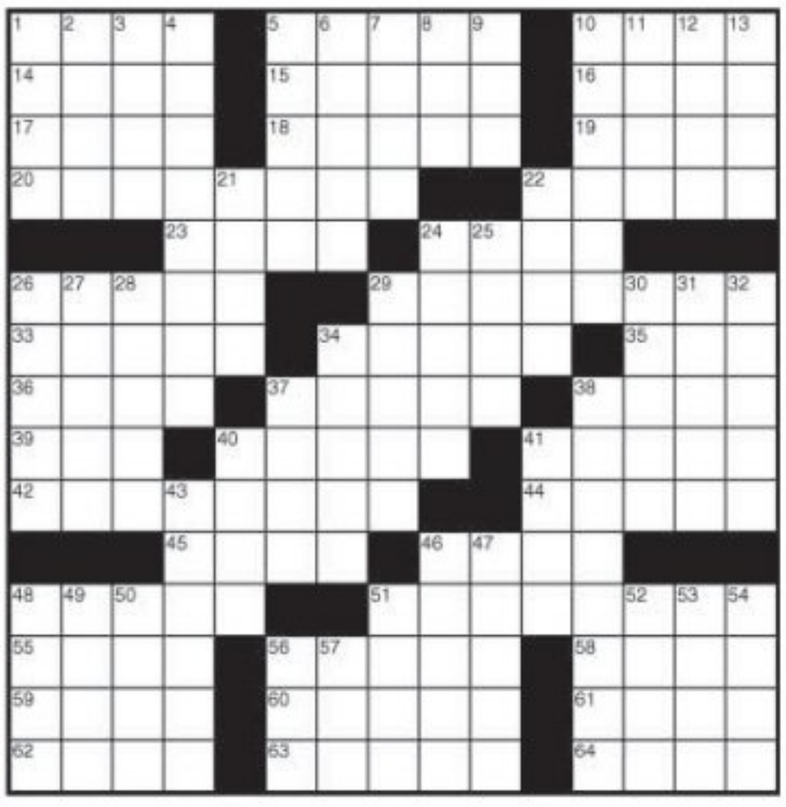
		7			9	6	3	
9				3	8	4		
4			6			5		
				1				4
5		1				8		3
6				7				
		6			3			9
		9	7	5				6
	7	4	9			3		

How to play
Fill in the grid so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1-9. There is no math involved. You solve the puzzle with reasoning and logic.

Crossword

Across
1 Play a round
5 Intended
10 Cavity detector (hyph.)
14 Diva's tune
15 — to the teeth
16 Jean Auel heroine
17 Graceful wrap
18 Oxygen producers
19 Do perfectly
20 Algae
22 Florentine poet
23 Wedding cake section
24 "— be surprised!"
26 Tomato jelly
29 Burly
33 Reflect
34 Pleasure craft
35 Road hazard
36 Metallic sound
37 Muslim garment
38 Send packing
39 Devotee
40 Cornball
41 Ruling group
42 Spicy sausages
44 Auto-racing family
45 Prolific auth.
46 Santa —, Calif.
48 Minimum
51 Spectacular orchid
55 Foot part
56 Railroad switch
58 Outback mineral
59 Pocket jingler
60 Combine
61 Roman emperor
62 Forest ruminant
63 Earth pigment
64 Kind of pool

Down
1 Pant
2 Uttered
3 Turkish currency
4 Swooning
5 Not glossy
6 Foul-up
7 "You said it!"
8 Before marriage
9 Gridiron stats
10 Coleridge setting
11 Mr. Seacrest
12 Touched down
13 Sturdy lock
21 Recoil
22 Tape of a thousand uses
24 Icky
25 Labor Dept. division
26 Upper room
27 — kebab
28 Tonto's Scout, for one
29 Female horses
30 Pride members
31 Keen
32 Pave over
34 Klondike territory
37 A real clown
38 Skedaddle (2 wds.)
40 Insinuate
41 Unbiased
43 Serving of bacon
46 Grazing land
47 Web-footed mammal
48 "Shane" star
49 Old barge canal
50 Pinnacle
51 Sidewalk's edge
52 Touche provoker
53 Knitter's supply
54 Sunblock additive
56 Dallas sch.
57 Haw's partner



Yesterday's answer

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Sox players who could surprise through spring

MLB. The Red Sox are again counting on several players to exceed expectations.

If you claim that last February you knew that Koji Uehara would put forth one of the finest seasons a reliever has ever had and that John Lackey would be, arguably, Boston's most valuable starting pitcher and that Daniel Nava would rank third among American League outfielders in OPS and that Jose Iglesias would be traded after hitting .330 in 63 games and that a ho-hum series of free-agent signings would be the catalyst to a Red Sox World Series run, then you, my friend, are a liar.

In fact, if you claim just one of those predictions as your own, you may still need a reminder of the virtue of honesty. However, you've inspired us to think differently.

Andrew Miller had a 1.31 ERA in his final 21 games of 2013. / GETTY IMAGES

In this season of predictions and rankings, here are Red Sox players that could exceed expectations:

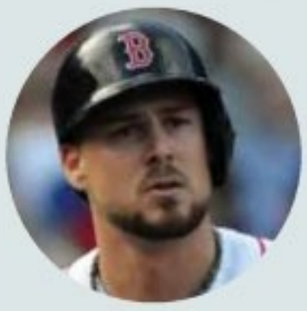
Andrew Miller

Before a foot injury ended his season July 6, Miller was continuing his transition from former first-round bust as a starter to a shutdown reliever. Conversely, his injury was why many perceived the Red Sox to lack bullpen depth entering the postseason. Manager John Farrell has already tabbed Miller as one of the candidates to close if Uehara is hurt, and if the tall lefty curbs his walk totals a bit, the phenomenal strikeout figures (99 in 71 innings the last two seasons) will yield big outs late in games. Miller's final 21 games before the injury: 20.2 IP, 1.31 ERA, 30 K/9 BB.

A.J. Pierzynski

The man most everyone across MLB loves to hate will likely be adored in Boston, a town which tends to gravitate toward athletes who play with a chip on their shoulder. Don't be surprised by some standout numbers this spring and early in the regular season; Pierzynski is a year removed from a career-high 27 homers with Chicago and has hit .322 in 32 career games at Fenway. Bank on the former White Sox and Rangers backstop to be another one of those lynchpin "glue guys" in the Gomes, Ross, Napoli, Victorino mold, and to provide a more consistent defensive presence that was lacking with Jarrod Saltalamacchia.

TONY LEE
sports@metro.us



Ryan Lavarnway

A can't-miss kid a few seasons ago when he turned Triple-A pitching into Swiss cheese, Lavarnway is now lost in the shuffle. However, he swung a better bat in limited chances late last season and may only need some regular at-bats to find a groove in the majors, if the opportunity arises. Maybe it comes when one, or both, of the 37-year-old catchers – or the 38-year-old designated hitter – are hurt. Lavarnway has reportedly made some plate adjustments that he hopes will yield a return to the form that saw him mash 18 homers in Pawtucket in 2011.

3 SPORTS

Trade season

B's to target help on 'D'

Bruins GM Peter Chiarelli told 98.5 The Sports Hub that he wants to add a defenseman before the NHL trade deadline next Wednesday at 3 p.m. "The market is very tight," Chiarelli said. "I would anticipate doing something."

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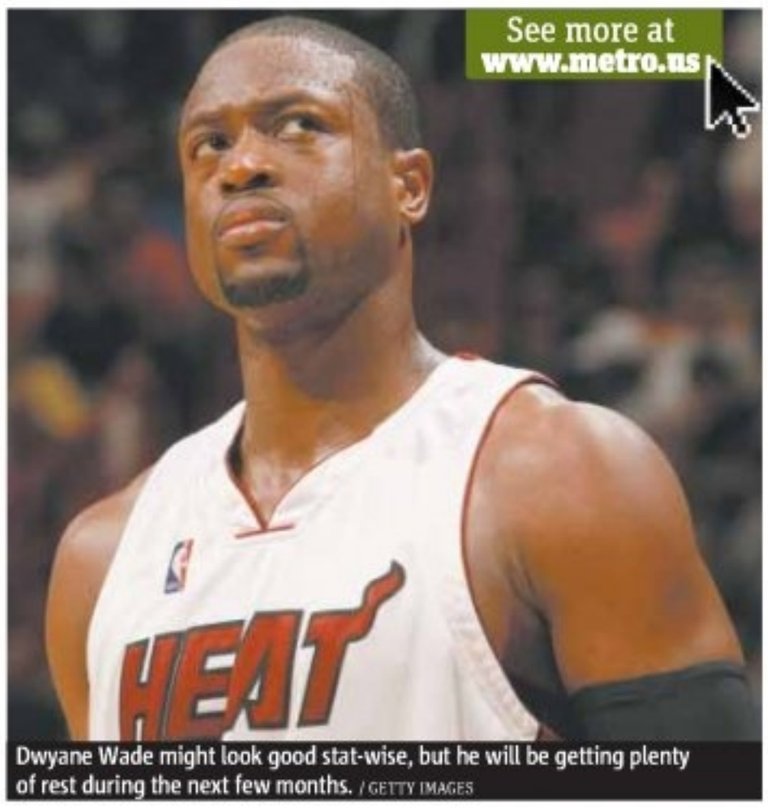
Maxing out

Far too often, head-to-head hoops matchups are decided by raw games played in a given week. Al Jefferson for two games or Marcin Gortat for four? We're not going to dump our studs, but we are going to bolster the bottom of our roster with guys operating on better schedules. Over the final four weeks of the regular season, the Nets, Heat, Hawks, Pacers and Raptors all play a healthy 15 or 16 games. The Warriors and Clippers play a meager 12. The Blazers (March 24) and Bucks (March 10) have rare five-game weeks coming up.



Dwyane Wade might look good stat-wise, but he will be getting plenty of rest during the next few months. / GETTY IMAGES

Beware of rest

Unfortunately, NBA coaches don't have fantasy owners in mind over the final couple weeks of the regular season. They're selfishly worried about having fresh players for the playoffs. Therefore, we can predict a ton of DNP-CDs — that's "did not play, coach's decision" — in the fantasy playoffs, especially from aging veterans. Dwyane Wade sat out nine of the final 14 games last year and eight of the final 16 in 2011-12.

NFL news

Packers coach Mike McCarthy raved about Jarrett Boykin at the combine. It means free agent James Jones is gone, and Boykin is going to be the No. 3 wide receiver.

Category hunt

Identify the five statistics you're going after before the playoffs and build the bottom third of your roster from there. If you can't win blocks and rebounds but do have a chance in 3-pointers and assists, there is little reason to carry Roy Hibbert over Kendall Marshall.

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